Somalia's Endless Transition: Breaking the Deadlock

by Andre Le Sage

Key Points

Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was given a second lease on life in January 2009, after successful peace negotiations in Djibouti produced new TFG leadership and yielded substantial international backing. However, the TFG remains weak and has yet to develop new political alliances or military capabilities that provide traction against Islamist insurgent groups. The insurgents themselves—including al Shabab and Hizbul Islamia—are also weak and internally divided.

Local and international efforts to end the ongoing stalemate in Somalia have been frustrated, resulting in diverging strategic prescriptions for the way ahead. On the one hand, the TFG has proposed a military offensive to gain control over a larger swath of Mogadishu. On the other hand, the inability of foreign military and governance support to advance the transition have led some analysts to argue for a strategy of "constructive disengagement." A detailed assessment of the current situation reveals opportunities for the TFG and its international supporters to drive additional wedges between the insurgent groups, degrade their capabilities, and extend TFG control in Mogadishu and other parts of south-central Somalia. Rather than disengaging or rushing toward military action, this requires international pressure on the TFG to engage in political deal-making that co-opts key subclans and elite actors, and lays the groundwork for effective security operations at a later stage.

Government Performance

In January 2009, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed succeeded Abdullahi Yusuf as president of Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Sheikh Sharif took office following the conclusion of United Nations (UN)–brokered peace negotiations in Djibouti between a warlord-dominated TFG and moderate opposition forces that led the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) in 2006. It was hoped that Sheikh Sharif would move forward with the long list of transitional tasks required to establish a permanent government for the country and extend control over areas seized by al Shabab.[1] To his credit, Sheikh Sharif's appointment led to the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from the country, and eliminated al Shabab's ability to use Ethiopian occupation as a rallying cry. TFG supporters also point to ongoing efforts to reinvigorate the constitutional process, draft a citizenship law, make senior-level appointments in a revived judicial system, establish an independent central bank, utilize port revenues for public service delivery, and craft political cooperation deals with the regional administration in Puntland (northeast Somalia) and other militias opposed to the insurgency.

Nonetheless, most of these efforts remain on the drawing board and will do little to extend the TFG's political base of support or area of territorial control. The TFG still does not have a functioning, cross-clan military force, let alone a capable police force or judicial system, despite continued foreign efforts to train and equip Somali forces.[2] Poor command-and-control systems, limited pay, internal clan divisions, and a lack of willingness to fight continue to hamper TFG as a unified force. Furthermore, no civil service currently exists, and essential social services are not being provided by the TFG. The parliament is able to achieve quorum but meets infrequently, and many members have left Mogadishu for security reasons. In fact, the very survival of the TFG depends on the continued presence of peacekeepers from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).[3]

In addition, the TFG is a divided institution. Sheikh Sharif has not emerged as a strong leader, and much of the power in Mogadishu is wielded by his subordinates, including the new Speaker of Parliament Sharif Hassan, Minister of Interior Abdulkadir Ali Omar, and Minister of State

1. REPORT DATE **JUN 2010**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED **00-00-2010 to 00-00-2010**
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **Somalia's Endless Transtition: Breaking the Deadlock**		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
		5b. GRANT NUMBER
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER
		5e. TASK NUMBER
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **National Defense University,Institute for National Strategic Studies,260 6th Avenue Ft. Lesley J. McNair,Washington,DC,20319**		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**		
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
14. ABSTRACT		
15. SUBJECT TERMS		

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**	**Same as Report (SAR)**	**8**	

for Defense Indha Adde, in their discrete areas of operation. These and other TFG officials operate independently in a manner reminiscent of clan-based warlords in years past. Squabbling between factions of the TFG has brought transitional efforts to a stand-still.[4] The TFG also has a remarkably weak clan base of support. The key Hawiye sub-clans that dominate Mogadishu (including the Abgal, Habr Geidr, and Murosade) are all split internally between those that sup-port the TFG, those that support the insur-gency, and those (probably the majority) that are hedging their bets between the two and attempting to survive.[5]

In the Juba Valley, Darod subclans, pri-marily the Marehan and Ogadeni, are also split between pro– and anti–al Shabab forces, with a clan-based struggle for the southern port city of Kismayo taking primacy over TFG-insurgent struggles. The southern agricultural regions of Bay and Bakol are dominated by the Rahanweyn clans that have done little to resist control by al Shabab. In central Somalia, a series of subclan-based militias and governance initiatives have emerged, many using the name Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a (ASWJ).[6] However, they have not thrown their full weight behind the TFG despite recent political agreements between the groups. Finally, the Isaq of the north-west and Darod:Majerteen of the northeast are focused respectively on the internal political competition for control of the Somaliland and Puntland governments.[7]

Status of Insurgent Groups

Al Shabab and, to a much lesser extent, Hizbul Islamia control most of southern Somalia. However, these groups are facing their own challenges, and are not operat-ing from a position of strength. Both groups are split internally, and they are increasingly competing with one another. Since the death of Saleh Ali Saleh "Nabhan," the future of the East Africa al Qaeda cell and its relationship with al Shabab are uncertain.[8] Given confusion surrounding the structure and leadership of these groups, there is a

dangerous tendency to treat them as singular, monolithic actors.

Hizbul Islamia has always been an amalgam of four different movements, including the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS)–Eritrea faction led by Hassan Dahir Aweis, the Somalia Islamic Front (SIF) led by Aweis's military protégés, the Ras Kamboni group in Lower Juba, and the very small Anole faction led by Darod:Harti clan interests in Lower Juba.[9] Aweis and the SIF have been marginalized by al Shabab's advances in southern Somalia, the rise of ASWJ, and support for the TFG among many Habr Gedir:Ayr leaders. The Ras Kamboni group has come under control of more moderate, clan-based leaders—notably Ahmed Madobe and Ibrahim Shukri—since its main Islamist leader, Hassan al-Turki, fell ill. Beyond these divisions, clashes between Ras Kamboni and al Shabab for control of Kismayo have left Hizbul Islamia so weakened that it no longer appears to function.[10]

The most hardline and ideologi-cally motivated al Shabab militias remain those run by Ahmed Abdi Godane and Fu'ad Shongole around Mogadishu, and Ibrahim Haji Jama "al-Afghani" around Kismayo.[11] These individuals are seen as the primary leaders of al Shabab's foreign fighters (including the suicide bombers), the strategists favoring al Shabab support for global jihadi agendas rather than a narrower focus on controlling Somalia, and those with the deepest ties to the East Africa al Qaeda cell.[12] On February 1, these al Shabab leaders issued a statement proclaiming their desire "to connect the Horn of Africa jihad to the one led by al Qaeda and its leader Sheikh Osama bin Laden."[13] However, similar statements have been made by al Shabab leaders in the past without a corresponding response from al Qaeda's senior leadership to cement a merger between the groups.

Al Shabab's leader in the Bay and Bakol regions, Mukhtar Robow, has been able to run local affairs from Baidoa without substantial resistance from the Rahanweyn

clan. Despite his vociferous jihadi rheto-ric, Robow's governance agenda appears less extreme than that of his al Shabab coun-terparts. In fact, tensions have been high between Robow and other al Shabab com-manders for some time.[14] He came into conflict with Godane, particularly after the December 2009 Shamo Hotel bombing, and there are rumors that Robow has reached out to the TFG as a potential first step away from al Shabab. However, in the absence of a formal split with Godane and others in al Shabab, Robow has maintained his extremist credentials by allowing foreign fighter training camps to operate in his area of control, appearing in al Shabab propaganda videos with al Qaeda operatives, and stating al Shabab's support for al Qaeda in Yemen.[15]

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Al Shabab's rank-and-file militia and local clan partners evince even less loyalty to the group's overall cause. Many of these join al Shabab for parochial reasons and are not otherwise supportive of its radical Salafist ideology. Some clans send militia and money to al Shabab as a political hedge in uncertain times. Other clans agree to join al Shabab as a means of gaining short-term primacy in long-running struggles with other clans for local control. Some individuals join al Shabab for the financial incentives it offers ($200 to $300 promised at the time of recruitment), or for offers of food and clothing. Other individuals are simply forced to join al Shabab as they impress youth into militia, often accompanied by threats to families not to resist.[16]

Nonetheless, some al Shabab militias remain on the offensive. Al Shabab units appear responsible for a growing number of recent attacks in Puntland and Somaliland. Both regional administrations are facing governance crises—due to postponed elections in Somaliland, and increasingly authoritarian rule in Puntland—and al

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Shabab appears to be capitalizing on these to extend its operational reach.[17]

Backlash Against al Shabab

Somali public support for al Shabab and Hizbul Islamia has dwindled rapidly. In fact, the group's political ascent was never due to mass public support for its violent, extremist ideology. Until the rise of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) in 2006, al Shabab was a small, clandestine group engaged in destabilization activities against warlords and the TFG, and they provided protection for the East Africa al Qaeda cell. Its fortunes changed because of al Shabab's participation as the most effective security force of the very popular ICU phenomenon, the group's leading role against Ethiopian forces after the ICU fell, and its subsequent political/military prowess against the remarkably weak TFG and clan-based forces in southern Somalia.[18]

Since late 2007, al Shabab has attempted to gain legitimacy by "liberating" villages from nominal TFG control, punishing criminals who proliferated after the ICU fell, holding reconciliation ceremonies among local clans, and turning control over to local groups under the guise of Islamic governance. Yet where al Shabab has attempted to govern the territory it controls, local discomfort has become evident. There are a number of different elements at work in the public backlash. Somalis chafe against al Shabab's draconian vice laws (for instance, prohibitions against playing or watching football or listening to music) and *hudud* corporal punishments (including conducting amputations on thieves or stoning adulterers). Attacks by al Shabab, particularly the December 3, 2009, bombing of the Benadir University graduation ceremony at the Shamo Hotel, are seen as atrocities committed against the best and brightest youth in Somali society.

Furthermore, al Shabab has disrupted or forced the closure of international humanitarian efforts, including limiting UN and nongovernmental organization presence resulting in the suspension of food aid. The group has promoted nonlocal clan influences and leaders in southern Somalia; this includes the dominance of northern Somalis from the Isaq clan, including

Somalia
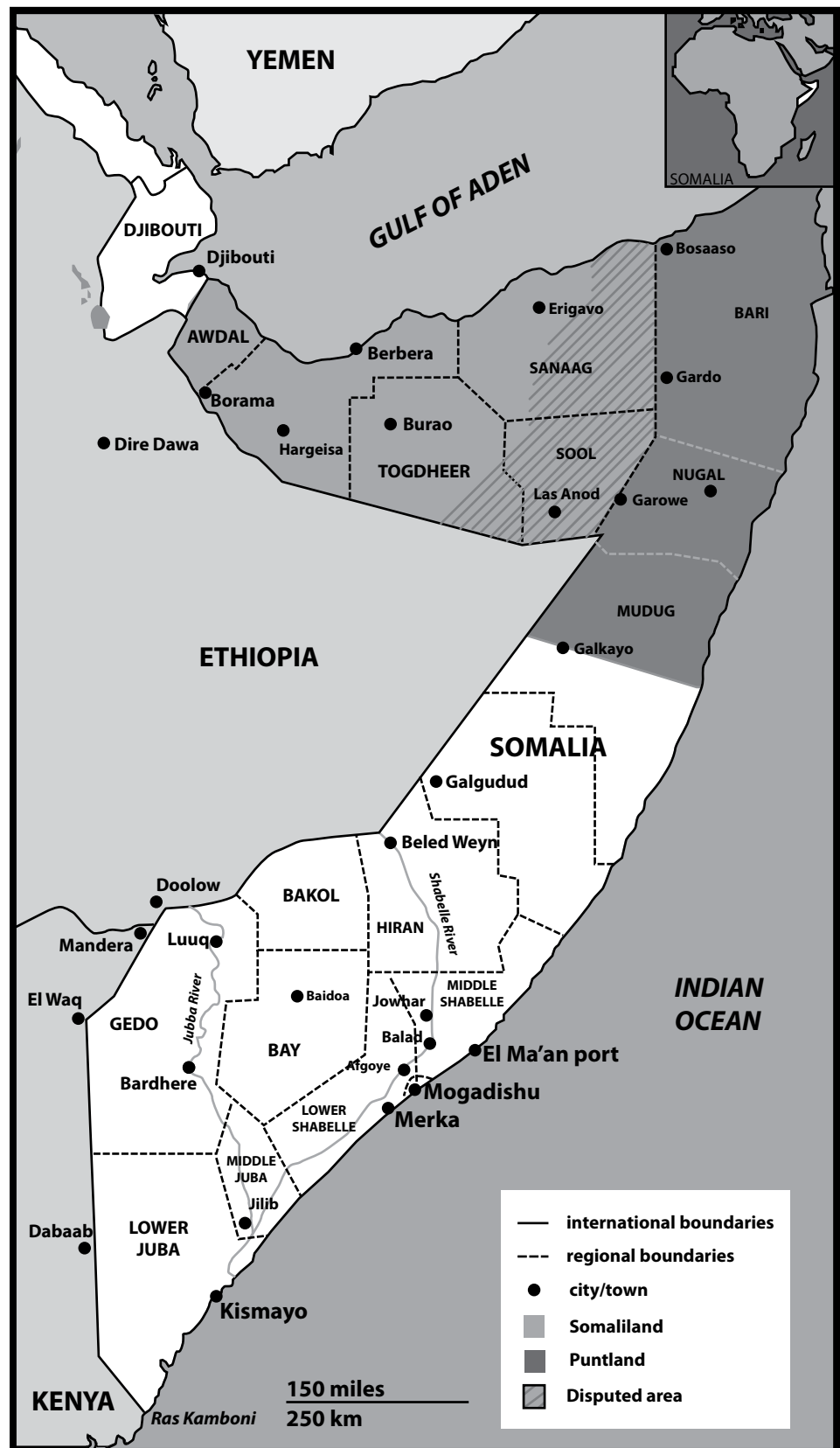
Godane and al-Afghani in Hawiye areas of Mogadishu and Darod areas of Kismayo, respectively. Finally, al Shabab–led attacks against Sufist shrines and religious leaders and the group's Salafist interpretations of Islam are viewed as the product of an unwelcome influence by foreigners.[19]

Despite this growing backlash, the Somali public remains politically weak and fragmented, and al Shabab maintains a monopoly on the means of violence in areas under its control. Moreover, Somali civil society groups have been intimidated by insurgent assassinations and remain disenchanted with the TFG. As a result, their role in mobilizing the public against al Shabab remains limited. In addition, neither the TFG nor the international aid community has effectively utilized Somali anger over either al Shabab's recent atrocities or the group's role in denying relief assistance to Somalis as a means of further delegitimizing the insurgents.

A number of new forces have emerged over the past year to counter al Shabab influence in southern and central Somalia. Most notably, this includes multiple clan-based ASWJ groups operating in Galgadud, Hiran, and Gedo.[20] There are also reports of new groups emerging, including the "Galmudug" initiative linked to the Habr Gedir:Saad subclan and the "Himan and Heeb" initiative of the Suleiman subclan. There is also potential for the Ras Kamboni group under Ahmed Madobe and Ibrahim Shukri to defect from the insurgency into a position that is not a political challenge and that may end up supporting the TFG. These are all positive developments, but they remain fragile and local political ambitions overlap. There is serious potential for each to fall into the trap of "warlordism" and clan-based competition for control of key locations and resources, which would further complicate the quest for stability in central Somalia.

A Military Solution?

While al Shabab appears to have the upper hand in Somalia today, both the TFG and the insurgent forces are facing enormous challenges. To date, al Shabab's success in southern Somalia is less an indicator of its own strength, and more a function of the weakness of its opponents at the TFG, clan, and communal level. Overall, if the TFG is to succeed, al Shabab's slow advance must be checked by a countermobilization that provides Somalis with an alternative for which they will truly fight. This requires further efforts by the TFG and its potential Somali partners to create a unifying political vision and practical governance agenda, enter into negotiations to establish a network of key clan-based constituents, and show signs of success in order to mobilize public support.

Unfortunately, the TFG—with support from AMISOM and international partners, including the United States—has opted to put a military campaign ahead of political action. The TFG has publicly stated its intent to organize a military offensive in Mogadishu within the coming months, most likely with the support of AMISOM forces.[21] Furthermore, Kenya is widely reported to be planning an anti–al Shabab offensive into the Juba regions of southern Somalia, targeting the capture of Kismayo.[22] There is serious and growing concern that these offensives are unlikely to succeed.

First, given the TFG's military weakness and divisions between subclans, it risks engaging in a battle that, if unsuccessful, will cost the TFG the international and local confidence it has been able to retain thus far. In Mogadishu, the insurgents are aware of TFG plans and are likely reinforcing their positions in the city with a focus on thwarting AMISOM's armored vehicle capabilities.[23] The Juba offensive may actually drive more clans into the arms of al Shabab, including promoting an alliance of Marehan militia with al Shabab to defend Kismayo against Ogadeni control.

Second, it is unclear if the TFG, even with AMISOM support, has sufficient forces to engage the insurgents effectively. Focusing on the current disposition of forces between the TFG and al Shabab is entirely misleading. The TFG and al Shabab may each be able to mobilize several thousand men under arms. However, this represents only a percentage of the number of armed militia in Mogadishu, let alone south-central Somalia. These other militia can be considered "nonaligned" forces at the moment, but may be forced by politi-cal, military, or economic circumstances to fight with either the TFG or the insurgency once the offensive begins. Without understanding and working to leverage the interests and capabilities of these nonaligned forces—including subclan and business militia—there is a real danger that military planners are not taking into account all forces that will potentially be involved in the conflict.

Third, there is a danger that building a strong TFG military capability will drive nonaligned groups (clans, subclans, and key elites with their own militias) into a defensive posture that opposes TFG and international interests. It is common Somali practice for such groups to band together across clan and ideological divides to "strategically balance" against any new military initiative of which they are not a part. After several decades of colonialism, military dictatorship, and civil war, the main Somali experience with any state has been predatory and

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negative. Building a strong TFG force that is not widely negotiated and representative from the start may foment more opposition to the TFG. At the extreme, groups that currently are nonaligned could join with elements of the insurgency.

Fourth, al Shabab and Hizbul Islamia are unlikely to confront TFG and AMISOM forces in a toe-to-toe struggle to hold ground in Mogadishu. Rather, the insurgents are likely to mount a limited resistance, but temporarily disperse their forces. Then, if the TFG attempts to hold the territory it has seized, al Shabab and Hizbul Islamia will be able to harass it with more hit-and-run attacks, leading to a period of prolonged skirmishes rather than stronger TFG control (let alone governance) of the contested areas.

Nonetheless, AMISOM, the United States, and European partners have tacitly supported the TFG's plans for military action, possibly out of frustration with the inability of the TFG to gain momentum against al Shabab through political negotiations or the provision of good governance, social services, and public security. Despite speculation that the United States is preparing for its own military intervention in Somalia, U.S. officials have clearly stated that they are only providing military training, equipment, and funding to the TFG.[24] However, in the absence of overt countervailing pressure to emphasize negotiations to build a stronger political base before resorting to force, this amounts to international approval and indirect support for the TFG's military course of action.

"Constructive Disengagement"

The ongoing stalemate in Somalia has led some analysts to call for the United States and its partners to adopt a more radical strategy called "constructive disengagement." According to a recent report published by the Council on Foreign Relations, this would be "a modified containment strategy" that includes limited and precise U.S. military strikes against al Qaeda operatives in Somalia; tolerance of and dialogue with al Shabab if that group rejects al Qaeda's jihadi agenda, refrains from regional aggression, and allows foreign aid to flow; diplomatic engagement with Arab partners to support negotiations and with Ethiopia to limit its support for Somali militias; and further support for development and governance capacity-building efforts.[25]

On the one hand, this strategy is grounded in a politically realistic assessment of trends in Somalia, and many of its components should be taken seriously. Foremost, it recognizes the weakness of the TFG and its inability to absorb foreign assistance to build its capacity at this time. As stated above, the TFG remains deeply divided between competing leaders. It also provides no real support to the Somali population at this stage, and remains ill prepared militarily to seize and sustain control over territory from insurgent and clan militias. Hence, it is reasonable

to develop a strategy in Somalia that goes beyond support for the TFG and conditions political and military aid to Sheikh Sharif on his ability to build political alliances that will translate successfully into security gains. Negotiations, even with insurgent leaders, and diplomatic support from Arab and African partners alike may be useful in this regard. On the other hand, in security terms, the call for constructive disengagement is problematic. Foremost, this concept does not address how the United States or neighboring African countries will protect their national security interests in Somalia. Adopting a wait-and-see approach in which al Shabab might collapse under its own weight due to the challenges of governance in a clan-based system and its own internal leadership rivalries is not sufficient. The group, along with the East Africa al Qaeda cell, already has substantial space to operate in Somalia and to plan for attacks on Somali, other African, and Western interests. Moreover, al Shabab has enough funds and savvy leaders that it may be able to harness a sufficient coalition in the absence of the TFG to again solidify control over southern Somalia.

Even if a constructive disengagement approach is adopted, the United States, European countries, and concerned African neighbors would still need to be involved in Somali affairs to build effective liaison relationships to disrupt al Shabab and al Qaeda. The existence of the TFG today provides a political framework for such engagement under the auspices of advancing the Djibouti peace process, and foreign partners will not be accused by the Somali public of directly supporting unpopular warlords—a situation that helped bring al Shabab to the fore. To this extent, the transitional process and its institutional structure—although not necessarily the individuals who currently hold seats in the TFG—need to be protected.

Continued support for the TFG should not preclude engagement with other anti-insurgency and peacebuilding constituencies in the country. A robust approach to countering the insurgency would see the United States and others simultaneously undertaking dialogue with the TFG, ASWJ, and other political, military, and economic actors throughout the country. Al Shabab

and Hizbul Islamia are relatively weak and unpopular in Somalia today, even if they control more territory than the TFG. They are also spread thinly across the south of the country. With effective negotiations, it would be possible to forge a common platform for the TFG to cooperate with local actors to combat the insurgency.

Leading with Negotiations

To build an effective political coalition that would increase the chances of eventual military success, the TFG needs to dramatically improve its outreach to key Somali subclans and clan-based elites who are either supporting or acquiescing to the insurgency. If the TFG is not to follow the example of its predecessor, the Transitional National Government, in a slow slide to oblivion, this requires the use of political and economic inducements, as well as the threat of military sanctions, to win new supporters, expand the TFG's base of support, and enable it to extend influence into new areas.

Many different negotiation mechanisms are available to Sheikh Sharif in his current position, including both carrots and sticks. The carrots include the allocation of cabinet-level posts in government and public-private sector partnerships to cooperatively manage port revenues, introduce new currency, and share out postconflict reconstruction contracts. Potential sticks would include threats

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to target "spoilers" of peace efforts and supporters of the insurgency with UN-backed financial and travel sanctions against key actors, not to mention the potential for legal sanctions or targeted military operations.[26] Such "wheeling and dealing" may not be

appetizing to would-be peacebuilders, but is common in the Somali context. The point is to address how the material benefits of such deals are spread around in a strategic manner that can co-opt key subclans and elite interests that are required to extend the TFG's base of support and undermine that base for the insurgency.

For instance, in North Mogadishu, the TFG would need to focus on key leaders within the Abgal:Harti community. Those connected with El Ma'an port (including Abukar Omar Adane and Abdulkadir Enow) are key power brokers with vested property and business interests that they feel are threatened by the TFG. Their current support for insurgents may be primarily driven by these financial interests, which the TFG could offer to protect and even promote in return for political support. Similar approaches could yield fruit with other key subclans, including the Habr Gedir and Murosade, whose key business and political leaders include individuals such as Mohamed Deilaf, Ahmed Nur Jumale, and others.[27]

Further engagement with new anti– al Shabab militias, such as the Ahlu Sunna wal Jama'a groups in central Somalia, is also urgently required. This dialogue needs to focus on improving TFG–ASWJ political and military cooperation. Developing better international understanding of the groups is also important so diplomats can work with ASWJ to develop coherent political agendas and some degree of local representation. It is critical to ensure that their short-term operations against al Shabab do not degenerate over time into something more predatory against the local population, into independent political ambitions that compete with the TFG as much as al Shabab, or into simple and parochial clan-based initiatives focused on seizing land and other assets from neighboring clans.

Finally, the international community needs to continue applying pressure on the political leadership and opposition in both Somaliland and Puntland to resolve their internal crises and reinvigorate their local political processes. This will involve sending clear messages of dissatisfaction with current performance, withholding nonessential assistance efforts, and encouraging dialogue on the future political dispensation in each region. Without a resolution of the immediate problems in northern Somalia, al Shabab will have an increasingly open field to penetrate Somaliland and Puntland, destabilize their security situation, ally with existing opposition forces, and provide leadership to the disenfranchised.

Strategic Security Planning

Once the TFG has established a sufficient base of political support, additional military support will be required. However, rather than focusing strictly on a short-term offensive, it should be premised on longer term planning to deepen clan-based alliances and support the country's plan for a decentralized form of government.[28] The TFG (or whatever Somali authority follows) will certainly require a well-trained, highly mobile, and effective security force controlled from the central level of government in Mogadishu. However, that is unlikely to be the only security force the country requires, and the current approach to military support for the TFG does not address this issue. A decentralized Somali system may include not only a medium-size national force, but also multiple smaller forces at the regional level. Designing and supporting such a structure today could help to absorb forces currently under the sway of warlords or other power brokers outside the capital city. Allowing regional leaders to keep their forces under local command would also ease clan and elite actors' tensions about the emergence of an overwhelming TFG force that they cannot control.

In major urban areas such as Mogadishu, there are also opportunities to recreate some of the localized, sub-district level security initiatives that existed before the UIC took power. These were quite effective in some locations from 2004 to 2006. If political negotiations followed by a TFG offensive are successful in expanding a "green zone" in Mogadishu, working to stand up new neighborhood security groups, business security groups, and (moderate) shari'a courts could help govern any space that the TFG claws back from the insurgency.[29] Finally, outside Mogadishu, there are opportunities to work with Ethiopia, Kenya, and others to ensure that their ongoing support for ASWJ and other Somali forces opposed to al Shabab falls in line with a broader, more coherent political agenda to build the support base of the TFG and ultimately transform the security sector in a strategic manner.

If Somalia's Transitional Federal Government is too fragmented to undertake such negotiations and strategic planning, international partners—particularly the United States and European allies—need to resist the TFG's impulse to seek a military solution without sufficient political preparations. They should increase pressure on President Sheikh Sharif to overcome factionalism within TFG ranks, to engage in negotiations with key clan constituencies, and to broaden the TFG's base of support. The TFG also needs to use such efforts to take advantage of schisms within the ranks of al Shabab and Hizbul Islamia. If the TFG continues on its current trajectory, it will have achieved little by the time its transitional mandate ends in 2011. It must be put on notice that even though the international community values the TFG's transitional role, its leaders cannot expect continued international diplomatic, financial, and military support without tangible improvements in performance.

Notes

[1] Ken Menkhaus, John Prendergast, and Colin Thomas-Jensen, "Beyond Piracy: Next Steps to Stabilize Somalia," Enough Project, May 2009, available at <www.enoughproject.org/files/publications/SomaliaBeyondPiracy.pdf>.

[2] Thus far, training for TFG security forces has been provided by Djibouti, Ethiopia, France, Kenya, Sudan, and Uganda. The European Union has also announced plans to train additional Somali forces. See Amnesty International, "Controls on Military Assistance to Somalia Must Be Tightened," January 21, 2010.

[3] Paul D. Williams, "Into the Mogadishu Maelstrom: The African Union Mission in Somalia," *International Peacekeeping* 16, no. 4 (August 2009), 514–530.

[4] UN Integrated Regional Information Network, "Somalia: Government infighting 'good for insurgents,'" May 7, 2010.

[5] In summer 2009, al Shabab attempted to dislodge the TFG from Mogadishu and effectively fought through Sheikh Sharif's own Hawiye:Abgal:Harti subclan territory until AMISOM forces blocked its advance. The unwillingness of that clan to resist al Shabab in favor of a president from its own community is a remarkable demonstration of the TFG's lack of appeal.

[6] Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a has traditionally been a nonpolitical and nonmilitary movement uniting Sufist

scholars and preachers in Somalia. Over the past 2 years, however, some leaders within this network have developed a militia capacity opposed to al Shabab in Central Somalia. The largest contingents are drawn from the Hawiye:Habr Gedir:Ayr and Hawiye:Abgal:Waescle subclans.

[7] Information on clan dynamics in Somalia is derived from the author's field research in Nairobi, Kenya, in January 2010.

[8] Luis Martinez, "US Launches Military Strike in Somalia Against al Qaeda Target," ABC News, September 14, 2009.

[9] United Nations, "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1811 (2008)," S/2008/769, December 2008.

[10] "More Troops for Mogadishu," *Africa Confidential* 51, no. 6 (March 19, 2010).

[11] See *BBC Monitoring*, "Profile: Abu-Zubayr, the reclusive leader of Somalia's Al-Shabaab movement," May 20, 2009.

[12] "Shabab's Mixed Messages," *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor*, January 27, 2010.

[13] Huma Yusuf, "Somali Militant Group Al Shabab Aligns with Al Qaeda," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 2, 2010.

[14] United Nations, "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1853 (2008)," S/2010/91, March 10, 2010.

[15] Mohamed Ibrahim, "Somali Rebels Pledge to Send Fighters to Aid Yemen Jihad," *The New York Times*, January 1, 2010.

[16] Sudarsan Raghavan, "Somali Refugees Recruited to Fight Islamist Militia," *The Washington Post*, April 6, 2010.

[17] See International Crisis Group, "Somalia: The Trouble with Puntland," *Africa Briefing*, no. 64 (August 12, 2009), and Human Rights Watch, "Hostages to Peace: Threats to Human Rights and Democracy in Somaliland," July 2009.

[18] On the historical emergence of al Shabab, see Roland Marchal, "A Tentative Assessment of the Somali Harakat Al-Shabaab," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 3, no. 3 (November 2009), 381–404.

[19] See Jeffrey Gettleman, "Somali Backlash May Be Militants' Worst Foe," *The New York Times*, March 23, 2010.

[20] VOA News, "Somali Government, Religious Group Forming Anti-Rebel Alliance," February 22, 2010.

[21] *Jane's Intelligence Weekly*, "Mogadishu Braces for Imminent Somali Government Offensive," February 24, 2010.

[22] Malkhadir Muhumed, "Kenya Vetoes Somali Wish for Troops in Mogadishu," *The Washington Post*, March 30, 2010.

[23] Agence France Presse, "Al-Shabaab Reinforces Mogadishu as Somali Government Readies for Offensive," February 10, 2010.

[24] Johnnie Carson and Ertharin Cousin, "Statement on U.S. Policy in Somalia," U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, March 12, 2010.

[25] Bronwyn E. Bruton, *Somalia: A New Approach*, Council Special Report No. 52 (Council on Foreign Relations, March 2010).

[26] The Obama administration has already taken a first step in this direction with the imposition of an Executive Order in April 2010, seeking to block the property of individuals "contributing to the conflict in Somalia." See Associated Press, "Obama Addresses Deteriorating Somalia Security," April 14, 2010.

[27] Many of these individuals were identified in the March 2010 UN Monitoring Group report cited above. For a history of deal-making by these individuals, see Andre Le Sage, "Somalia: Sovereign Disguise for a Mogadishu Mafia," *Review of African Political Economy* 29, no. 91 (March 2002), 132–138.

[28] For a detailed analysis of this potential, see Matt Bryden and Jeremy Brickhill, "Disarming Somalia: Lessons in Stabilization from a Collapsed State," *Conflict, Security, and Development* 10, no. 2 (May 2010), 239–262.

[29] See Andre Le Sage, "Stateless Justice in Somalia: Formal and Informal Rule of Law Initiatives," Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, January 2005.

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